

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Introduction:

Claims 1 and 6 are amended, and claims 11 and 26-29 are canceled. Claims 1-10, 12, 16-22, 24, and 25 are now pending in the application. (Claims 13-15 and 23 were previously canceled.) Applicants respectfully request entry of this amendment and reexamination and consideration of the application.

Amendment Should Be Entered:

This amendment should be entered for the following reasons. Initially, although Applicants filed a Notice of Appeal on June 6, 2006, 37 CFR § 41.33 allows amendment to be made prior to the filing of an Appeal Brief as set forth in 37 CFR § 41.31. (See also MPEP §§ 1206 and 714.12.) Applicants have not filed such an Appeal Brief. A Pre-Appeal Brief Request For Review is not an Appeal Brief under 37 CFR § 41.31. Therefore, an amendment can still be filed.

Moreover, this Amendment clearly places the application in condition for allowance. In the final Office Action dated March 6, 2006, dependent claims 6 and 11 were identified as containing allowable subject matter and being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 6 has been so rewritten, and claim 11 has been written into claim 1. Claims 1 and 6 should therefore clearly be in condition for allowance. Moreover, all other claims that do not depend from claim 1 have been canceled. Therefore, upon entry of this Amendment, all pending claims will clearly be in condition for allowance.

All Rejections Are Moot:

In the final Office Action of March 6, 2006, claims 26-29 were rejected under 35 USC §112, first and second paragraphs. Claims 26-29 have been canceled without prejudice, mooting these rejections.

In addition, claims 1-7, 10, 11, and 16 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as anticipated by US Patent No. 4,983,804 to Chan et al. ("Chan"). Moreover, claims 1-5, 7-10, 13-16, 18-22, and 24-28 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as obvious in view of US Patent No.

6,150,186 to Chen et al. ("Chen") in combination with Chan or US Patent No. 5,418,811 to Ruffini et al. ("Ruffini"); claim 12 was rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as obvious in view Chen, Chan, and US Patent No. 5,340,537 to Barrett ("Barrett"); and claim 17 was rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as obvious in view Chen, Chan, and US Patent No. 5,476,211 to Khandros ("Khandros").

As discussed above, dependent claims 6 and 11 were identified as containing allowable subject matter. Claim 6 has been rewritten in independent form and should therefore be in condition for allowance. In addition, claim 1 has been amended to include the features of claim 11, and claim 1 should therefore also be in condition for allowance. All other claims that do not depend from claim 1 have been canceled. Therefore, all pending claims are clearly in condition for allowance. All of the rejections are therefore overcome or moot.

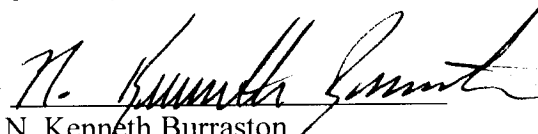
Conclusion:

In view of the foregoing, Applicants request that the Amendment be entered and the application allowed. If the Examiner believes that a discussion with Applicant's attorney would be helpful, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (801) 323-5934.

Respectfully submitted,

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